

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADP-00 AID-20 INT-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

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P 160005 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5994

INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 3445

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MX

SUBJ: SALINITY: STATEMENT BY FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA

LIMA FOR SECRETARY' S PARTY

1. FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA CALLED CHARGE EVENING MAY 14 TO READ HIM STATEMENT HE PROPOSED TO MAKE CONCERNING OUR SALINITY PROPOSAL. RABASA EXPLAINED THAT HE AND PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WERE UNDER GREAT PRESSURE TO MAKE SOME STATEMENT CONCERNING OUR SALINITY OFFER. BEFORE DOING SO, HOWEVER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS AGREEMENT WITH SECRETARY ROGERS THAT WE WOULD NOT NEGOTIATE THE DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL IN THE PRESS, HE WISHED TO BE SURE THAT WE WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY WITH WHAT HE WAS GOING TO SAY. RABASA FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAD ASKED THAT SECRETARY ROGERS MAKE NO SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO WELLTON- MOHAWK IN HIS PREPARED STATEMENT RELEASED AFTER HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA, GOM NOW FELT THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO REFER TO WELLTON- MOHAWK BECAUSE IT WAS SO WIDELY REGARDED AS THE SOURCE OF THE MEXICALI VALLEY' S PROBLEMS. RABASA THEN SAID, " FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL INFORMATION, WE DO NOT THINK THE PROPOSAL IS ENOUGH." HE THEN READ FOLLOWING STATEMENT TWICE TO CHARGE, AND CHARGE TOLD HIM HE SAW NO DIFFICULTIES

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WITH IT. STATEMENT RECEIVED HEAVY PRESS PLAY IN THIS MORNING' S NEWSPAPERS.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

STATEMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

" THE SIMPLE FACT THAT AFTER 12 YEARS THE US GOVERNMENT HAS COME TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT IT IS INDISPENSABLE TO REACH A PERMANENT, JUST AND DEFINITIVE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF SALINITY OF THE COLORADO RIVER WATERS CONSTITUTES AN UNQUESTIONABLE ADVANCE.

3. AS THE MEDIA HAS NOTED, THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC YESTERDAY HAD A CORDIAL CONVERSATION WITH THE US SECRETARY OF STATE, WILLIAM P. ROGERS. DURING THAT TALK, MR. ROGERS DELIVERED TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA THE PROPOSAL WHICH HIS GOVERNMENT HAS MADE FOR A PERMANENT, JUST AND DEFINITIVE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE SALINITY OF THE COLORADO RIVER WATERS.

4. THE DELIVERY OF THIS PROPOSAL IS IN RESPONSE TO THE OBLIGATION ASSUMED BY PRESIDENT NIXON IN WASHINGTON WITH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA IN JUNE OF LAST YEAR. THE DEFINITIVE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM, ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN PROPOSAL, WILL NOT BE IMMEDIATE; HOWEVER, DURING A FIXED PERIOD, A TOTAL RESOLUTION OF THE QUESTION WILL BE ACHIEVED. MEANWHILE, THE US WILL CONTINUE TO EXERT ALL EFFORTS AIMED AT THE GRADUAL AND PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF THE WATERS, AS WELL AS CONTINUING TO SUSTAIN THE MEASURES WHICH WERE ACHIEVED AS RESULT OF THE IFLERVIEW BETWEEN PRESIDENTS NIXON AND ECHEVERRIA.

5. ON THAT OCCASION, AS YOU WILL REMEMBER, AND AS A RESULT OF THE FIRM PRESENTATION WHICH OUR PRESIDENT MADE TO HIS NORTH AMERICAN COUNTERPART, AN IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF THE WATERS WHICH ARE DELIVERED TO MEXICO WAS ACHIEVED AND, SINCE IT WAS PUBLICLY KNOWN, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WAS ABLE ONLY TWO DAYS AFTER HIS VISIT PERSONALLY TO CORROBORATE IN MEXICALI THAT THIS IMPROVEMENT WAS ALREADY NOTICEABLE AT MORELOS DAM.
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6. THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF PRESIDENT NIXON SUBMITTED HIS REPORT ON DECEMBER 29 OF LAST YEAR . THIS REPORT, AFTER THE STUDY OF COMPETENT AMERICAN AUTHORITIES, WAS APPROVED BY PRESIDENT NIXON AND CONSTITUTES THE BASIS OF THE PROPOSAL OF MAY 13.

7. YESTERDAY AFTERNOON DURING THE COURSE OF HIS NORMAL ACTIVITIES, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA CONVOKED THE OFFICIALS AND TECHNICIANS WHO HAVE BEEN WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM TO ANALYZE THE DOCUMENT WITH THE CARE AND DETAIL WHICH THIS SUBJECT UNQUESTIONABLY DESERVES.

8. BASICALLY THE PROPOSAL CONTAINS FORMULAS FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF AN AGREEMENT AIMED AT ELIMINATING THE ADVERSE EFFECTS WHICH THE WELLTON- MOHAWK DRAINAGE WATERS HAVE HAD ON THE WATERS WHICH MEXICO RECEIVES AT MORELOS DAM WHICH WILL REQUIRE THE CARRYING OUT OF (PUBLIC) WORKS ON THE PART OF THE US, AS WELL AS MEASURES OF A LEGISLATIVE CHARACTER AND DETAILED TECHNICAL WORKS. HOWEVER, SOME OF THE ASPECTS OF THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE REVIEWED AND SURELY THE ANALYSIS OF THE DOCUMENT WILL LEAD TO CLARIFYING DISCUSSIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE WE ARE ABLE TO TAKE A FINAL DECISION.

9. MEANWHILE, THE SITUATION WHICH HAS PREVAILED SINCE JUNE OF LAST YEAR IN THE MEXICALI VALLEY WILL CONTINUE -- THAT IS TO SAY THAT THE FARMERS OF THE REGION WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL WATER OF A QUALITY SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH THEIR AMERICAN COUNTERPART USERS RECEIVE."

10. MAY 15 MEXICO CITY PRESS UNIFORMLY AND ACCURATELY REPORTS ESSENCE OF COMMENTS MADE BY FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA. EDITORIAL REACTION IS GENERALLY OF A " WAIT AND SEE" VARIETY. HOWEVER, " EXCELSIOR" TAKES LINE THAT " MOST IMPORTANT IS THAT WE BE COMPENSATED FOR DAMAGES..."
END UNCLASSIFIED.
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